SPHERE SUMMIT

Cato Institute

High School Social Studies

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**Topic**:

Constitutional Convention - A Lesson on Civil Discourse

**Key Question:**

How does this debate reflect the enduring tension between liberty and order?

**Preparation:**

Students have already been informed of norms that should be used in a classroom discussion.

**Objective:**

Analyze primary source documents (ie Brutus I and Federalist 10 excerpted) and apply to modern role of government.

Demonstrate civil discourse

**Procedure:**

Students will write questions based on documents for student led discussion (may use either styles)

Multiple styles of classroom discussion

* Liberty Fund - Everyone has to read and one person leads the discussion. They have questions they have developed ahead of time. Students raise hands to get on queue and can offer smaller points and the leader keeps track of the discussion and questions with the topic.
* Harkness Method- involving students seated in a large, oval configuration to discuss ideas in an encouraging, open-minded environment with only occasional or minimal teacher intervention.
* Socratic Seminar- form of cooperative argumentative dialogue between individuals, based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and to draw out ideas and underlying presuppositions.

**Assessment:**

Students will determine after the discussion if they would be a federalist or anti-federalist and provide reasoning. Students will then join in small groups of four with 2 on each side. They will discuss with each other what the other side decided after the primary source discussion. Practicing the civil discourse that was discussed within the lesson. Students will have notes on both sides of the discussion. Finally, they will turn in the opposite side’s argument to show that they were paying attention to this discussion.